

What The Fog
Nebenmensch as Nebelmensch
I.E.G.

1- Here is my reference on Laertes as the Nebenmensch of Hamlet:

Seminar 6, Version Miller/Hommel, Wo Es war 3-4, S. 24 f., Übersetzung geändert. Vgl. Version Miller, S. 390 f. via <https://lacan-entziffern.de/ich/graf-des-begehrens-idealich-spezialistisch/>

"That Laertes here is Hamlet's fellow human being (semblable) is explicitly articulated in the text, albeit indirectly, I mean to say within a parody. (...) You see, the image of the other (that of Laertes) is portrayed here in such a way that it completely absorbs the image of the one who looks at it. This reference, very Gongoristic, embellished with jokes, gains its full value by Hamlet addressing Laertes in this style before the duel. At this paroxysm of imaginary absorption, which is formally articulated as a speculative relationship, as a mirror reaction, the dramatist clearly lays down the point of aggressiveness. The one who is most admired is the one who is fought against. The one who is the ideal self, according to the Hegelian formula of the impossibility of coexistence, is also the one who must be killed." (Seminar VI, April 22, 1959)

You may find better translations of Lacan or read it in the original, however, this Rolf Lemitz (link above) is an excellent interpreter of Lacan for our German-speaking colleagues but translation is not a barrier anymore after the emergence of AI. You will enjoy his essay and his struggle to localize the Nebenmensch on the graph of Lacan. This itself is a testament to its Nebelisch (foggy) nature that we talked about yesterday. His swing between Ich-Ideal and Ideal-Ich shows is based on a mirror-like spatiality of our "confrontation" with the Nebenmensch. According to our theoretical endeavors yesterday, there is a foggy opaque sphere of proximity blended with a paradoxical uncanny intimate sort of intimacy.

2- This Uncanny or "Unheimlichkeit", in which "heim" represents home, allows us to interpret the Nebenmensch as the Nebelmensch, the Man of the fog. In this revised version, the spatiality of the Nebenmensch takes on a spherical nature, adding another layer of complexity to its dynamics. Unlike the previous mirror-like confrontation, where the interaction was limited to a two-dimensional plane, the spherical spatiality introduces a sense of multidimensionality and fluidity.

Within this spherical realm, the optic and scopic dimensions engage in an ambiguous interplay. The boundaries between the two become blurred, and their roles interchange anamorphically, transforming the conventional 180-degree perspective into a full 360-degree, and vice versa. This fluidity and ambiguity in the interplay of vision and perception evoke a sense of disorientation and vertigo.

The reference to Don's work on Hitchcock's exploration of vertigo serves to highlight the parallels between the Nebenmensch's spatiality and the cinematic experience of

vertigo. Cinema is the experience of a sur-face. Just like the sur-name in which your name is the name of an Other, the experience of cinema is the experience of disorientation: It is a face of an other place. A surface that is factually a point of singularity, a lack, because it always shows somewhere else as an other face. You are there and not there at the same time. Disorientation and vertigo are the true nature of the cinema as a sur-face just as Hitchcock masterfully depicted the disorienting effects of vertigo through his visual storytelling techniques, This film is a metaphor for the cinema itself. a mirror for the cinema as a mirror that always that shows the face of another person. A surface with infinite curvature. The Nebenmensch's spherical spatiality elicits a similar sense of unease and fascination.

By drawing attention to Don's insightful analysis of Hitchcock's work and the fantastic lectures of Andy and Lorens yesterday we are falling into the *absorbing* realm of cinematic theory/theoretical cinema and its connection to the intricate exploration of the Nebenmensch as the medium of a ghost: The uncanny.

3- Interestingly, Freud's text (Entwurf) employs a spatial framework. The German word "Entwurf" typically translates to "suggestions" or "drafts," but its root verb "werfen" also means "to throw," and "entwerfen" can be understood as "to throw out." This connection brings us closer to Heidegger's concept of "Geworfenheit," which again revolves around the notion of throwing. It suggests that as humans, we are fundamentally cast out or excommunicated by nature. The same holds true for the word "Ausstoßung" (Expulsion), which also carries the connotation of throwing out.

4- The true horror occurs when the "other" emerges from within rather than from outside. This is the uncanniness of the Nebenmensch as someone who lives in our vicinity. Too near. I was searching for that famous horror film director who experienced genuine fear when he remembered that he was Jewish, while clutching a cross to ward off the Dracula vampire, remember? I couldn't find the specific example I was looking for. Its inverted version is also funny. This time the Vampire is a Jew and the cross has no effect, so the vampire can become close, that is it can turn into a Nebenmensch (Neben=near):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoqj9oWFhMw>

5- **Wo ES war soll ICH werden!**

In the phrase "Wo Es war, soll Ich werden", the meaning of "Es" can be better understood within the context of pre-Christian religions of the Germanic people, such as Heathenry and Shamanism. In these belief systems, "Es" refers to the spirit or essence that permeates all things: It carries a hauntological quality, implying a sense of fluidity and transformative power.

This understanding of "Es" aligns with Heidegger's philosophical concepts, particularly his exploration of being and the nature of existence: the interconnectedness of mind (Geist) and spirit, recognizing their inseparable relationship and so on... In German, the word "Geist" can refer to both the mind and the spirit.

When we encounter the phrase "It is raining," this impersonal pronoun "It" in English corresponds to the same "Es" in German. Here, "Es" represents an indeterminate, undefined entity, encompassing the natural forces at play in the act of raining. It signifies the fluidity and elusive nature of the phenomenon, reflecting the same hauntological quality associated with "Es" in the broader context.

6- But why "Wo ES war"?" Why the past tense. "Where IT **was**" Why not the present tense of time? this invites contemplation of the elusive nature of our place within the fabric of ES as our being as a dead ghost: A father. There is a father behind the curtain. Father of someone.

7- This text is a good one for understanding the Ghost that blows behind the wind as a blow in German post-romantic philosophy as a relict of the Heiden-Schamanen:

https://www.philosophie.uni-wuppertal.de/fileadmin/philosophie/PDFs_allg/Seminarmaterialien/Trawny/Heideggers_Ge-Stell.pdf

The sentence "Das Ding dingt" of Heidegger explains the timeless autonomyical feature of ES as das Ding: The rain rains, the wind winds ... and accordingly, the ES knows nothing other than itself. Vertigo is its "where" to go!

Is there any structural relation between A-ware and no-where?

Structural Analysis of the Parallels

Hamlet/Laertes vs. St. Martin/Begger

The point 6 brings us back to Laertes as the Nebenmensch of Hamlet and its structural similarity (albeit in a completely negated version) with the story of Saint Martin and his cloak. There is an interesting structural relation between these two, in the sense of Levi Strauss. I would like to create a table to highlight these parallels:

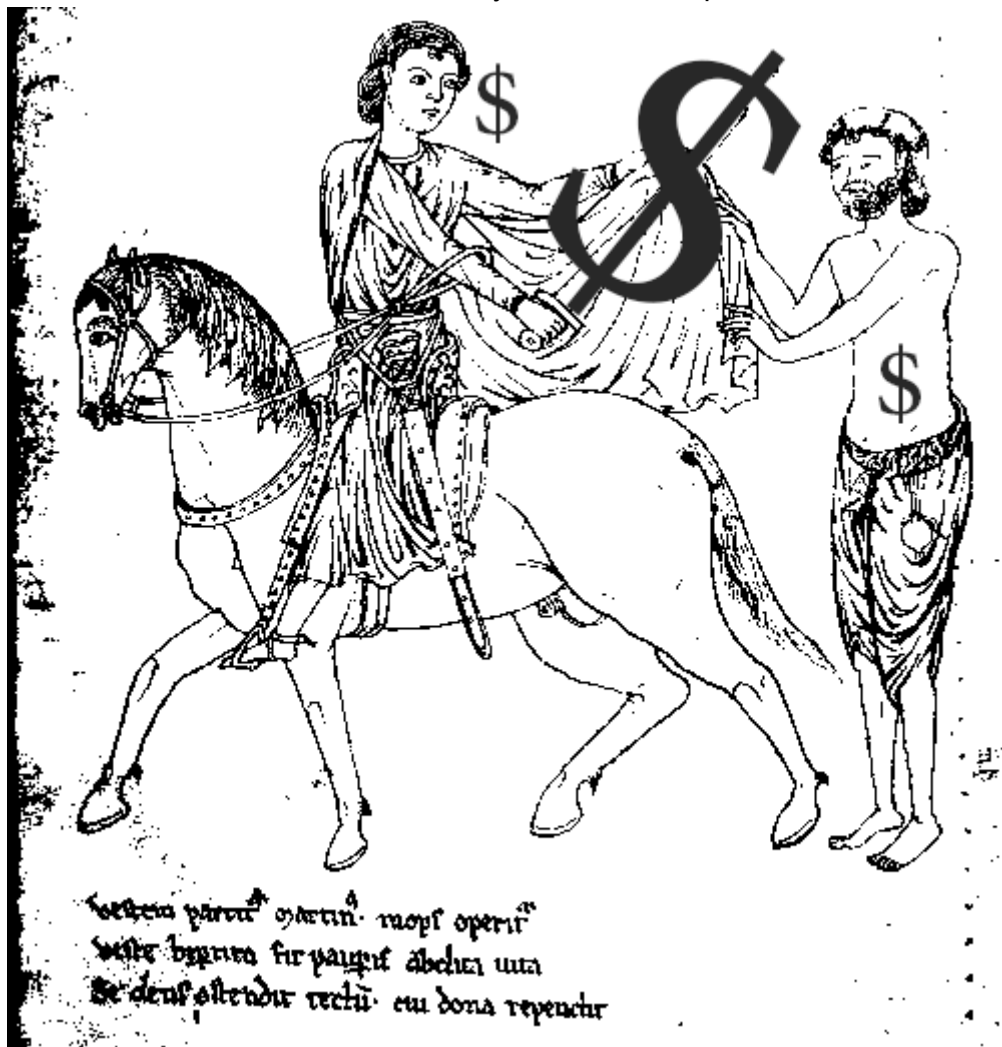
	Hamlet/Laertes	St. Martin/Begger
Cloak	Shared at the end of the story	Shared at the end of the story
Revenge	Feelings of revenge for a dead father	Act of charity towards a beggar
Sword	Tears the fabric of a garment (kills the body)	Tears the fabric of a garment (protects body)
Pharamakon	Poisoned sword	Gift with double meaning
Split subjects	Hamlet and Laertes	St. Martin and Beggar
Division	Split subject divided by a sword	Split subject united by an act of charity

In the story of St. Martin, the cloak is shared first at the end, while in Hamlet, both Hamlet and Laertes share a desire for revenge for their dead fathers. Both stories involve a sword that tears the fabric of a garment, one to protect the body and the other to cause harm.

Additionally, both stories deal with the concept of Pharamakon, where the gift carries both positive and negative aspects. (Derrida Stuff. Read some parts of my dissertation on this:

https://www.academia.edu/98728684/Esmailpour_Ghoochani_Iraj_2017_B%C4%81b%C4%81%C4%80b_D%C4%81d_The_phenomenology_of_sainthood_in_the_culture_of_dreams_in_kurdistan_with_an_emphasis_on_sufis_of_q%C4%81derie_brotherhood_Dissertation_LMU_M%C3%BCnchen_Fakult%C3%A4t_f%C3%BCr_Philosophie_Wissenschaftstheorie_und_Religionswissenschaft)

It is important to note that Laertes' sword was poisoned. They can be seen as split subjects in the Lacanian sense, but in the larger context, they form a bigger split subject divided by a sword, which can be seen as an "S-word." These are just a few of the parallels between the stories, and there may be more to explore.



Mirror-stage vs. Polonius behind the curtain

Hamlet's Killing of Ophelia's Father as a Negative Version of the Lacanian Mirror Stage:

In comparing the moment when Hamlet kills the father of Ophelia to the Lacanian mirror stage, we can identify several parallels that highlight the negative aspects of this encounter. We have partly explored some of these parallels. Here they are again in the form of a table:



Lacanian Mirror Stage

Child
M-Other (Mother)
Reflective surface
Gaze and eye
Embrace of image
Identification

Negative Version in Hamlet

Hamlet (a man)
A Father behind the curtain
Opaque curtain
Hidden ear
One kills the other
Betrayal and confrontation

In Hamlet's situation, we see a negative deviation from the mirror stage: Instead of a child, we have a grown man, Hamlet, who is confronted by the presence of Ophelia's father. Instead of a nurturing M-Other figure, we have "A" father hidden behind a curtain, symbolizing a secretive and oppressive presence of a ghost /this is how we imagine the ghost, hah). The reflective surface of the mirror is replaced by an opaque uneven wavy curtain, representing again a lack of self-reflection and clarity. Instead of a gaze and eye contact, there is a hidden ear, signifying a covert mode of surveillance and information gathering. The ear is a negative gaze. It pulls instead of pushing. Moreover, in the Lacanian mirror stage, the child embraces and identifies with the image in the mirror, whereas in Hamlet's case, one person kills the other, resulting in a violent confrontation rather than a harmonious embrace. However, this discloses /dis-cloth the true nature of the child's embrace: Death drive aimed to annihilate the Doppelgänger. This ob-scene act of betrayal and confrontation disrupts the process of identification and further complicates Hamlet's sense of self.

Furthermore, we can draw a connection to political subjectivity by considering the concept of "*Big Brother is listening!*" This phrase alludes to the idea that surveillance and constant monitoring can create a form of subjectivity where listening replaces the gaze.

Conclusion

It is the death drive in play. Embracing and killing are the same blurred act aimed at clarity.

Forgetful Notes

These are a few brief notes that I have taken while attending your lectures. I apologize for not being able to align them precisely with the text since I don't have it at hand, but perhaps you can assist in connecting the dots :) :

Remembrance is an act of judgment. Freud's exploration of Signorelli: forgetting exists because it triggers certain associations. The repressed memories act as obstacles, preventing us from recalling the initial subject matter. Paradoxically, our struggles with forgetfulness and recollection can be seen as a form of active remembrance, as they effectively bring forth repressed memories. Don can explain this better.

“Es” is the locus at stake

Philanthropy is definitely not Love. Love is the devil: Loving something or somebody is always fueled by the hate that we feel for everything else as the rest. Love, can be likened to a double-edged Sword or Es-word: \$/\$.

Immigration studies/Party-wall/ Homi Bhabha: You can be similar to us but not too similar: Bhabha, H. K. (1985). Sly Civility. *October*, 34, 71–80.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/778489>

Anthropological Considerations:

From Judgment of Attribution to the judgement of the Attitude: “What do you want?” Clifford Geertz “thick description”. He asks “what is the meaning of raising of an eyebrow?”

Camilla H. Mortensen. (2005). (Eco)Mimesis and the Ethics of the Ethnographic Presentation. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 118(467), 105–120.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137812>

Border is the Danger not the Other side the border: Mary Douglas's book "Purity and Danger" explores the cultural and symbolic significance of purity and pollution in different societies by *classification* for instance classification of animals as edible or inedible and how this classification reflects social and cultural boundaries.

Pork, being an animal with split hooves, would typically be classified as permissible or clean according to the dietary laws of certain cultures. However, its single stomach

contradicts the requirement for an animal to have a "cloven hoof" and "chew the cud" to be considered pure in other cultural and religious contexts and so on... She has a really interesting insight of the animals who are like our neighbors. We like those who are completely alike and respect those who are completely different and feel anxious for all spectrum in between trying narrowmindedly to turn this spectrum into a line as its death.

Julia Kristeva, influenced by Mary Douglas, developed the concept of *abjection*: the process of rejecting and distancing oneself from what is considered impure or taboo. It involves the experience of discomfort and disgust towards certain aspects of existence, and the subsequent attempts to exclude or remove them.

These concepts shed light on social boundaries, cultural classifications, and the psychological processes of exclusion and rejection. The border or the wall is there as a clear cut simply because in some other realm, that is in the realm of ES there is no clear cut. There is ambiguity as Danger.